

Foreign News and Comment

Belgium Wants a River Bank; Holland Flares Up

IT SEEMS as though the controversy between Belgium and Holland relative to the readjustment of the boundaries fixed in 1839 and the control of the River Scheldt had reached an acute stage. Last Monday there was a report from Berlin about a breach of diplomatic relations between the two governments. Its accuracy was, however, denied by members of the Belgian peace delegation at Paris. The negotiations are in the hands of a joint commission composed of delegates of each of the five great powers and of Holland and Belgium, respectively, in accordance with the plan laid down by the Supreme Council of the Allies and announced by the French Foreign Minister, M. Pichon, on June 4 last.

The point at issue is virtually the revision of the treaty of 1839—better known as the historic "scrap of paper"—by which the separation of Holland and Belgium, united since 1815 in the Kingdom of The Netherlands, was consummated. The dissolution of the union, which was one of the devices of the Congress of Vienna to redress the European balance disturbed by the French revolutionary wars, was the result of the Belgian revolution of 1830. The settlement of the common boundary line was made by the conference of the great powers on the basis of the territorial integrity of the old Dutch republic. Accordingly, Holland retained Zeeland-Flanders, or the territory on the southern, or left, bank of the Scheldt estuary, which had been Dutch since the first years of the seventeenth century, as well as Maastricht, which had formed a Dutch enclave in Belgian territory since 1632. This enclave was now connected with Holland by a corridor along the River Meuse. For ceding this corridor Belgium was compensated by half of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, then a possession of the Dutch King.

This arrangement left Holland in control of both banks of the Scheldt estuary, and thus of the entrance to the harbor of Antwerp, the chief Belgian seaport. The treaty of 1839, therefore, expressly guaranteed to Belgium the free use of the Scheldt, a measure which made possible Antwerp's development into one of the greatest and most prosperous shipping centers of the Old World.

Belgian Claim

Ever since the armistice of last November the sentiment was gaining ground in Belgium that the boundary arrangement of the treaty of 1839 ought to be revised. The Belgian nationalists set up a demand for Zeeland-Flanders, or the Dutch district on the left bank of the Scheldt, as well as the so-called Limburg "peninsula," which in fact is no peninsula at all, but merely a triangular salient of Dutch territory protruding along the Meuse between Germany and the Belgian province of Limburg.

The Belgian claim is based on the principle of nationality as well as that of strategic necessity. It is argued that the population of both Zeeland-Flanders and South Limburg is in tradition and sentiment not Dutch, but Flemish, as it is certainly Catholic and not Calvinist in religion. It is also argued that, while on the one hand the possession of the Maastricht salient is essential for the defence of Belgium's eastern frontier, the control of the left bank of the Scheldt is vital for the protection of Antwerp.

The Belgians claim that had the access to Antwerp from the sea been free, it would have been possible for the British to rush reinforcements by the sea route, and thereby not only the city might have been saved, but the entire course of the war might have taken a different turn. It is suggested from Belgian side that for the cession of the territories in question Holland should be compensated by the annexation of certain frontier districts of Germany, where Dutch dialect is spoken.

Holland

In Holland the demands of the Belgian nationalists have aroused profound indignation. It is pointed out, to begin with, that Holland is a neutral power, which by the strict-

est possible observance of her international obligations has acquired the right at least to be left alone. Moreover, the Dutch call attention to what they denounce as the shameless ingratitude of the Belgian people, hundreds of thousands of whom, made homeless by the German invasion, were received across the Dutch frontier with utmost hospitality and cared for by the Dutch government and people during their years of exile. The Belgians, the press of Holland charges, reciprocate now by an attempt to encroach upon the territory of a neighbor not only inoffensive but positively friendly.

Moreover, the Dutch deny emphatically that the issue of nationality can be raised at all. It is true that the inhabitants of Zeeland-Flanders and South Limburg are mostly Catholics, but so is almost one-third of the entire Dutch nation. As to language, it is practically impossible to draw a clear-cut line delimiting the Dutch and Flemish border dialects; as to history, the Dutch have been in undisturbed possession of the districts now contested for almost three hundred years; as to sentiment, the populations concerned are emphatically Dutch, and the most indignant protests against the Belgian annexationist plans were raised just in the disputed areas themselves.

Furthermore, it is argued by the Dutch that economically the Dutch control of the Scheldt estuary does not prejudice Belgian interests at all, as is shown by the phenomenal prosperity attained by both Antwerp and Ghent—which latter is connected with the sea by the Terneuzen canal, equally under Dutch control—during the seventy years of the pre-war arrangement. As to the strategic necessity of annexing the Maastricht "peninsula" to Belgium, the Dutch assert that the Dutch sovereignty over South Limburg has worked directly for the advantage of Belgium during the late war, since Dutch neutrality was respected by the Germans, and the border strip through which the German armies had overrun Belgium in 1914 has been considerably narrowed down thereby. Finally, the Dutch claim that the war, and more particularly the conquest of Belgium itself, has demonstrated the futility of relying on "strategic frontiers"—the fortifications of the Belgian boundary were considered the most

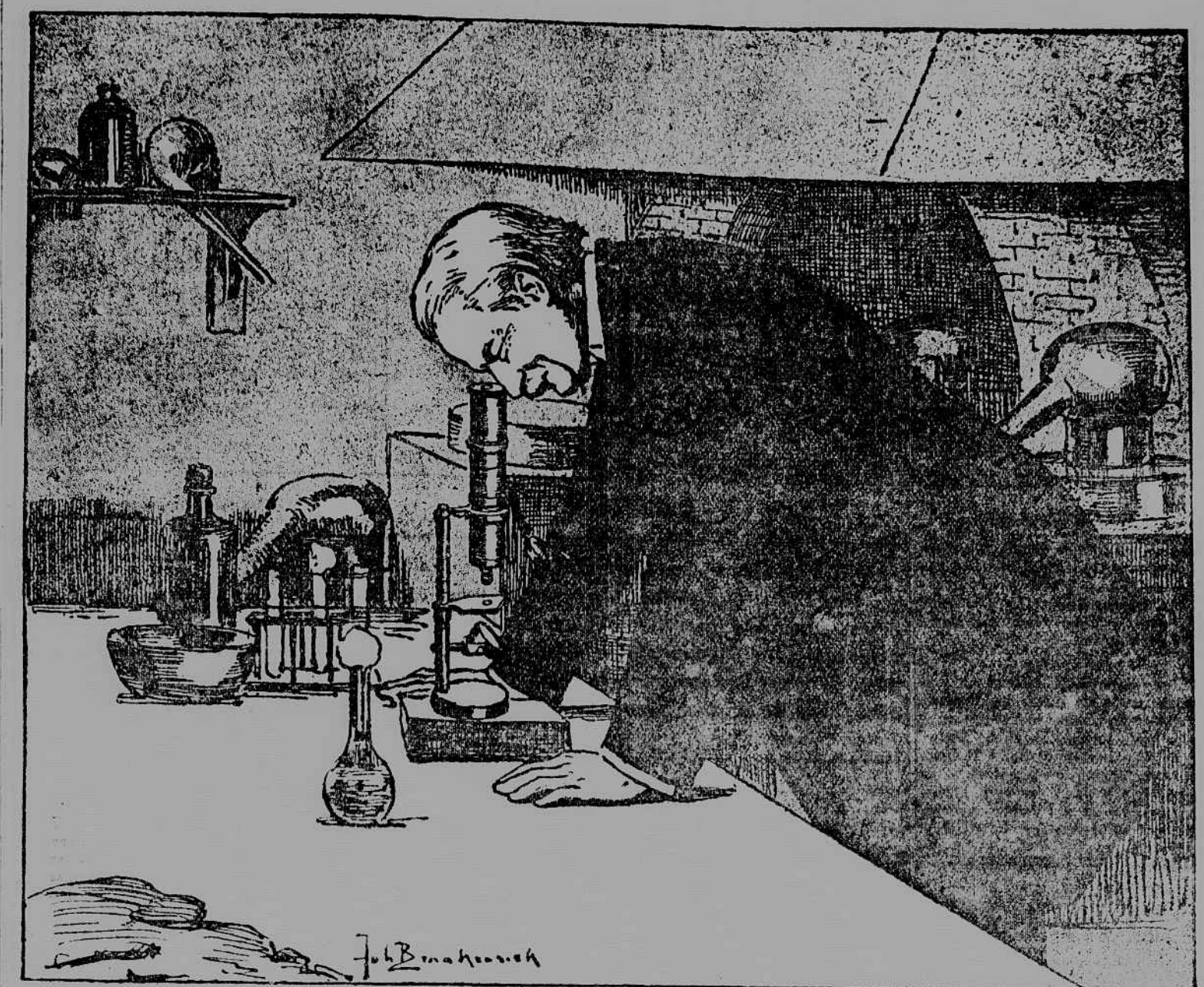
powerful in the world—and that the true protection of Belgium lies in the guarantee of the league of nations on the one hand and the friendship and good will of her neighbors on the other.

Here is the exposition of the Belgian standpoint, as framed by Dr. A. Hebbelynck, rector emeritus of the University of Louvain, who visited New York last summer.

"Belgium was compelled by the treaty of 1839 to recognize Holland's sovereignty over this territory now known as Dutch Flanders. In return Belgium was to be protected by treaties of neutrality the fulfillment of which was demonstrated in 1914 when Germany called them 'mere scraps of paper,' and invaded Belgium.

"The experiences of 1914 have made clear that unless Antwerp can even in time of war maintain its free access to the sea, unhampered by the quibbles

Lloyd George Seeks the Strike Bacillus



This cartoon, which comes from "De Amsterdammer," a magazine published at Amsterdam, gives a Holland commentary on the industrial unrest situation across the Channel.

of a neutral neighbor, the position of Antwerp is rendered indefensible for any length of time. The peril is made all the more acute by the fact that Antwerp is the only seaport available in Belgium for big ships such as army and ammunition transports.

"From the economical point of view it is an absolute necessity that Belgium obtain the right to manage without hindrance, as a sovereign and independent power, the whole water system not only of the Scheldt River from Antwerp to the sea, but also of the low-lying lands of northern Flanders and of the ship canal from Ghent to the Scheldt River at Terneuzen. The keys of Antwerp are at present in foreign hands. Belgium claims them back on the strength of principles of international law, to-day universally proclaimed."

Expounding Belgium's claims to

in the light of modern principles." He pointed out that Holland should be compensated by obtaining from Germany the provinces of Ostfriesland and Cleef, which, he says, are largely inhabited by Dutch-speaking people.

A Dutch Slant

The Dutch attitude is expressed in the following statement of Jonkheer van Swinderen, Dutch Minister in London and member of the Dutch delegation to the peace conference, as summarized by "The London Times":

"M. Van Swinderen began by drawing the attention of the commission to the fact that M. Segers, the chief Belgian delegate, although his conclusions, in accordance with the resolution of June 4, contained no 'transfer of sovereignty,' had yet made use of expressions which raised grave doubts as to the future intentions of the Belgian government. The Dutch delegate observed that it was impossible for the Dutch people to live in amity with a neighboring nation which was continually plotting attempts on Dutch sovereign rights.

"He stated emphatically that all concessions which Holland would be prepared to make were subject to the condition that the Belgian government would, once for all, renounce its territorial claims. He protested against

the misleading expressions 'le Limbourg veld' and 'la retrocession de la Flandre Zelandaie' used by the Belgian delegates. The actual frontiers between Holland and Belgium were of historic growth. As to the sovereign rights over waterways, for a country like Holland, composed of an intermixture of land and water, to part with any of them would be taking a dangerous first step on a road leading toward disintegration.

M. Van Swinderen pointed to the pre-war prosperity of Belgium generally, and Antwerp, Liege and Ghent in particular, as proof that the régime of 1839 had not been detrimental to the economic interests of Belgium. He also asserted that before the war the friendly relations between Holland and Belgium had never been troubled by these questions. The Belgian delegates had made much of the power which was vested in Holland of vetoing any amelioration of the common waterways by simply refusing her cooperation. M. Van Swinderen showed that never once in seventy-five years had Holland applied that veto.

"At the same time M. Van Swinderen stated that Holland was ready to meet all reasonable desires on the part of Belgium for the improvement of the way of commerce. Holland was ready to examine with Belgium an extension of the system of a common administration of the Scheldt, so that the river would always serve the increasing needs of commerce. Holland would not object to the construction

of an Antwerp-Rhine canal and of a canal from Antwerp to the Moerdijk. She would also, if Belgium should desire it, consent to a scheme of improvement of the Ghent-Terneuzen Canal in Dutch territory. On her part Holland considers herself justified in asking for Belgian cooperation in the questions of the improvement of the waterways in Limburg, of the communication between Liege and Maastricht, and of the drainage system of Belgian Campine waters in Dutch territory.

"As for the military question, M. Van Swinderen said that the exposition of the Belgian delegates had not convinced the Dutch delegation that Holland ought to alter her defence system to suit the interests of Belgium. He pointed out, however, that the status of Limburg in 1914 had been all to the advantage of Belgium, and as the Belgian delegates had shown some skepticism as to the attitude of Holland in the event of Limburg territory being violated by Germany, he declared emphatically that Holland would consider the violation of any part of her territory as a casus belli.

"In his peroration, M. Van Swinderen gave the assurance that Holland would be found ready to make sacrifices, if that was the only way to restore good relations with Belgium; but he reminded Belgium that her very suffering in the cause of liberty should make her refrain from any act which might appear to be an attempt on the independence of Holland."

No, as a Summer Resort Berlin Is Hardly a Winner

RESIDENTS of New York suffering from an excess of local patriotism sometimes assert that their city is the most satisfactory of summer resorts—meaning thereby that by staying in town during the hot season one may combine the accustomed comforts of the home and the various conveniences of metropolitan life with the outdoor pleasures of beaches and other resorts within excursion distance.

This may be true or may not—at any rate, the following account of the Berlin correspondent of "The London Times," relating to the advantages of spending the summer at the German capital, is likely to reconcile to their fate those Gothamites who, for some reason or other, were unable to transfer their summer residences from Manhattan to happier climes. The correspondent writes:

"To refer to Berlin as a 'summer resort' is a piece of irony frequently indulged in by those inhabitants whom circumstances do not allow to spend their holidays out of town. It is a phrase kept alive not by the voluptuaries, but by the dissipated habits of gambling halls—but by the simple bourgeoisie, which has to watch the pennings and the bread tickets and make the most of sunny Sundays by the Spree.

"The type of Teuton who as a rabid excursionist took his jaunts abroad in korballed boots, with a most squalid rucksack on his back, is sufficiently well known. He is not dead. The race of loud-voiced youths and freckled maidens who played guitars in woods in the gloaming still lives and waxes sentimental to the same old strains. But much of that would-be romanticism has given place to a prosaic suburban programme of cafes, cinemas and beer gardens; and for those who could never have been accused of staid adherence to the simple life, the city and its suburbs have become a place of amusements as the race meetings in Grunewald exercise a greater magnetism now than they ever did before the war.

"In his means of conveyance the Berliner of to-day cannot afford to be particular. The steeds that draw his drishkies and omnibuses are not fiery. His street trams are unclean and unbecoming. Almost the only quick motor-vehicles one sees in the streets are those attached to the Emperor's military missions, which seem to dart hither and thither at breakneck speed, compared with the local cars, and even astonish the natives by their lack of nauseating fuel-smells. The carriages of the Stadtbahn trains have long since lost most of their paint and much of their upholstery; the latter, one is told, has been appropriated in large quantities by the passengers for the making of clothes and the recovering of furniture.

"To the stranger coming fresh to Berlin it will no doubt seem remarkable that, with the once spotless thoroughfares as neglected as they are, the pavements and squares obstructed by noisy pedlars and the walls, lamp-posts, and monuments all placarded with ugly party-political and agitator posters, the masses of Berlin people can find so much contentment as they apparently do in spending their leisure hours in aimless rambles about the city. But the stranger would find that the new order, or rather disorder, of things affords the talkative, glib Berliner a measure of satisfaction in accordance with his 'radical' or 'reactionary' views.

"To the Sunday promenade the scene of the revolution are visible, but they are not so prominent as the stranger has been led to imagine. Here and there on the faces of the public buildings one sees gaping wounds. The Palace of the Hohenzollerns displays the damage inflicted on it by heavy mortars. The ex-imperial stables opposite are hidden behind a maze of scaffolding. One of the huge columns of the national memorial to the first William has been wrenched from its socket and there are splashes of machine gun bullets on the walls of several buildings in the neighborhood. But more attention is paid to the giant whale on exhibition on a Spree barge than to any of the scarred mansions round about.

"The Alexander Platz, the scene of the bitter fighting around the police presidency headquarters, is again full of the animation of a big marketing centre. Here, Sunday and weekday alike, the pedlars, who stand almost shoulder to shoulder along the pavements, are the most striking outcome of the disappearance of the oldtime Berlin policeman.

"The great green Tiergarten, its sunny spaces and shady sidewalks now looking their best, is the favorite 'summer resort' of a hundred thousand disillusioned families who, if they want to get sunburned, must do so at home. They seek the Hippodrome, where of an early morning the Haves, on foot, scowling jealously at the Haves, on horseback. They seek the cheap gayeties of the Zelten Parade,

where mating is easy and young girls learn the tricks of the trade at a shockingly early age. And they seek that pleasantest of attractions, the Zoo, which to most of them means a grouping of terraced restaurants and rustic taverns with the caged-in animals conveniently near—particularly at feeding time, when multitudes of infant Hansels and Gretels enjoy the real ecstatic hour of the week.

"And then to the cinema, and so home."

The Week Abroad

THE situation at Fiume is viewed by the Supreme Council at Paris with increasing gravity. It is feared that the movement started by d'Annunzio may spread to other parts of the Dalmatian coast, where there are cities with a large Italian population, situated in a Jugo-Slav district. Foreign Minister Tittori has resigned from the Italian Cabinet, and the Italian government has asked the Allies to drive d'Annunzio out of Fiume, without the aid of Italian troops.

Meanwhile, d'Annunzio has declared that he will never leave Fiume, neither dead nor alive, and is reported to have selected the site for his tomb in a cemetery overlooking the sea. A large force of Jugo-Slav troops is encamped within a few miles of the city. The Supreme Council has denied on a solution of the Fiume question, which has been approved by England and France, and called to Washington, for the approval of President Wilson. Steps for putting the solution into operation wait on the President.

The King and Queen of the Belgians and the Crown Prince have embarked on the George Washington for America. They will land at New York and go at once to Washington, where they will be the guests of the President at the White House.

Belgium and Holland are reported to have split over the revision of the treaty of 1839, and the ambassadors of both countries are said to have been recalled.

The French Chamber of Deputies asked for the publication of the full official reports of the peace conference, but Louis Barthou, former premier, gave Rene Viviani as authority for the statement that President Wilson had called Premier Clemenceau for his considered official reports as secret.

Premier Clemenceau declared the league of nations could exist even if it were rejected by the United States Senate.

Brussels has heard that within two weeks the Allies will demand from Holland the extradition of the former Kaiser.

Munich understands that Russian and German revolutionaries have decided on a general strike in Germany to force the overthrow of the democratic government in Germany, in favor of a communist régime.

George H. Roberts, British Food Controller, Delegate to the Supreme Economic Council meeting at Brussels, told the council that the world need have no fear of a food shortage this winter, provided there is proper care in the handling and distribution of food.

The political crisis in England has again passed, but several changes in the Cabinet are expected, among them, the transfer of Winston Churchill from the War Office to the Colonial Office.

It is reported in London that the Russian Soviet government has proposed peace to the Ukraine, and intends to seek peace with all nations in order to forestall a counter-revolution in Russia. Admiral Kolchek is reported to have resigned as head of the All-Russian government in favor of General Deniskine.

931,854 Soldiers' Parcels Handled by Paris 'Y'

Paris (By Mail)

Since May 1, 1918, when the department was organized, the Paris Y. M. C. A. has handled for soldiers a total of 931,854 packages, or practically 60,000 packages a month. These packages do not include the parcels that have been sent to the "Y" organization scattered through France, England and Ireland.



This map, showing Belgium and the Netherlands, pictures the scene of present controversy over a proposed alteration of the treaty of 1839, otherwise known as the historic "scrap of paper."

New Europe's Postage Map

The realignment of small nations produces a variety of new issues which form an album of interesting political history

"THE LONDON TIMES" states that the story of the New Europe continues to write itself in serial form on the pages of the stamp album. Fresh items of historical interest are being added almost daily. Poland's latest contribution to the record is a series of six postage stamps commemorative of the convocation of the National Diet, and includes the first stamp portrait of Ignace Paderewski as President of the republic. This features on the 15 fenigow value, lithographed in scarlet. The balance of the series comprises the following: Ten francs, claret (eagle); 20 francs, brown (M. Trammenski); 25 francs, olive (General Pilsudski); 50 francs, blue-green (eagle and sailing ship), and one mark, violet (eagle and Victor's faxes). All are inscribed "Sejm 1919 Roku."

The delivery of Riga from the Bolsheviks has been marked by the issue of three postage stamps of special design by the Lettish government, showing two female figures (presumably Riga and Lettonia) embracing before the walls of a city. In the foreground are seen a human skull and a withered bush, and the sky is illuminated by the aurora borealis. The values

and colors of the three stamps are: Five kopeks, carmine; 15 kopeks, green, and 35 kopeks, brown, lithographed and imperforate.

In the neighboring republic of Estonia the seventh centenary of the union with Denmark was celebrated by the creation of stamps, of restricted validity, in a design representing sea-gulls on a stormy sea, inscribed Eesti Vabariik (Estonian Free State). These stamps were on sale for three days only and the issue was limited to 3,500 specimens. Consequently the adoption of a new currency unit here—viz., "pennia," instead of "kopeks"—new stamps in a large numeral design are in course of emission, of which only the two penni orange and 5 penni green are at present in use.

The residue of the former Austrian Empire (now designated "German Austria") has been provided with distinctive postage stamps, in supersession of those adorned with portraits and emblems of the House of Hapsburg. The new stamps have been surface printed by the State Printing Works, Vienna, in three designs by the eminent artist Joseph Franz Renner. The values 3, 6 and 12 heller show a post-horn, and those of 5, 10, 25, 45 heller and 1 krone the arms of the new state, while the

four remaining stamps are of allegorical design.

A uniform postage stamp series for the newly constituted kingdom of Serbia-Croatia and Slavonia will shortly replace the separate issues at present current in the various states. The main feature of the design will be a portrait vignette of the veteran King Peter I, in a characteristic setting. New stamps are also in preparation in which will include the likeness of Czechoslovakia, the subject designs of President Masaryk.

As a tribute to the defence of Liege in the early days of the war a special 25 centimes postage stamp adorned with the city arms has been placed on sale there.

The Romanian Postal Agency in Constantinople, having recently been reopened, is provided with special postage stamps overprinted with a small circular cachet containing the inscription "Posta Romana-Constantinopol 1919." The Greek occupation of Asia Minor is commemorated in certain Turkish postage stamps, overprinted in Greek characters, "Hellenic Occupation of Cydonia," and issued in the Sanjak of Karassi.

Armenia will shortly be represented by stamps issued by the Republic of Acharia, in whose capital is the port of Baku.